

Weather

Below are several different kinds of weather conditions that those of us in Collin County may encounter at different times of the year. Suggestions of what to do during and after, and interesting facts are included.

Before you get started, we suggest that you take a look at what the American Red Cross suggests for your Family Disaster Supply Kit. Remember, the best way to increase your chances of surviving any kind of fire or disaster is to be prepared.

Essentials:

- Battery-operated radio
- Flashlight
- Extra batteries
- Do not include candles
- Contact lenses and supplies
- Prescription drugs
- Extra eye glasses
- Heart and High blood pressure medication

Water:

- 3 gallons/person – in a plastic container
- Additional water for sanitation

Food:

- Minimum 3 day supply of non-perishable food that does not need to be refrigerated and may need little to no water.
- Dry cereal
- Peanut butter
- Canned fruit
- Canned Juices
- Ready-to-eat soups
- Canned vegetables
- Ready-to-eat canned meats
- Quick energy snacks

Medication

- Laxative
- Aspirin or non-aspirin medication
- Insulin
- Denture needs

Tools & Supplies:

- Whistle
- Crowbar
- Paper, pencil
- Medicine dropper
- Signal flare
- Assorted nails, wood screws
- Plastic storage containers
- Cash or traveler's checks
- Non electric can opener, utility knife
- Paper cups, plates and plastic utensils
- Tape, duct and plumbers
- Patch kit and can of seal-in-air
- Shut-off wrench
- Aluminum foil
- Compass
- Plastic sheeting
- Needles, thread
- Matches
- Pliers, screwdriver, hammer
- Heavy cotton rope
- Map of the area

Sanitation:

- Disinfectant
- Soap, liquid detergent
- Feminine supplies
- Toilet paper, towelettes, paper towels
- Plastic garbage bags
- Household chlorine bleach
- Personal hygiene items
- Plastic bucket with tight lid
- Powdered mild
- Diapers
- Medication

Clothing & Bedding

- Sunglasses
- Hat & gloves
- Blankets or sleeping bags
- One complete change of clothing and a pair of shoes for each person
- Rain gear
- Sturdy shoes or work boots
- Thermal underwear

For Baby:

- Formula
- Bottles

For Pets:

- Food
- Records of vaccinations
- Leash, harness or carrier
- Non-tippable food and water containers

Important Family Documents:

- Important telephone numbers
- Record of bank account numbers
- Family records (birth, marriage & death certificates)
- Inventory of valuable household goods
- Copy of will, insurance policies, contracts, deeds, stocks and bonds
- Record of credit card account numbers and companies
- Copy of passports, social security cards, immunization records

Weather Conditions

High Heat
Wildfire & Wind
Tornado
Lightning
Flood
Winter Storm

High Heat

Heat wave. Common in our part of the United States. Some common terminology heard during this time of year and in the middle of a “heat wave” are:

Sweltering humidity – when the humidity along with the temperature is very high. This can be very dangerous when working outside.

Excessively dry condition – when little or no rain has been received or is forecast. Windy conditions can make things worse

Heat index – this is your body’s “best guess” on the temperature. It is based on the real temperature and the moisture present in the air. The higher the humidity the hotter your body thinks it is.

When It’s Hot

- } Stay in doors and avoid extreme temperature changes
- } If you do not have air conditioning available stay indoors on the lowest floor
- } Keep electric fan going
- } Drink plenty of fluids
- } Don’t eat big meals. Keep them small and frequent.
- } Keep the pets inside and make sure they have plenty of water
- } When outside wear lightweight and light colored clothing
- } Go slow and if you have to work outside do it very early in the morning
- } Use lots of sunscreen and wear a hat when outside
- } After coming inside continue to drink lots of fluids
- } NEVER take a cool shower right after coming inside and being very hot. This may cool your temperature down very quickly and cause dizziness and nausea

In An Emergency

If a heat related emergency happens first identify all symptoms then take appropriate steps:

Heat Cramps

Symptoms: muscle pains, spasms

Treatment: gently massage muscles, drink small sips of water

Heat Exhaustion

Symptoms: heavy sweating, weakness, cold and clammy skin, weak pulse, fainting and vomiting

If not treated the condition can worsen and lead to heat stroke

Treatment: seek rest in a cool place, apply cool wet cloths, sip water. If vomiting occurs seek medical attention.

Heat Stroke (Sunstroke)

Symptoms: cannot sweat, body temperature begins to rise. If the temperature becomes too high it can lead to brain damage. This can take as little as ten minutes.

Treatment: call 911 immediately. Remove clothing and sponge bathe with cool water. **DO NOT GIVE FLUIDS.**



Wildfire & Winds



Wildfires can begin and spread quickly. In dry conditions where wind is present fires can get out of control even quicker.

In Collin County we monitor the KBDI level. The KBDI (Keech Bryon Drought Index) is a way the Texas Forest Service measures the drought conditions throughout Texas. When the drought index reaches over 500 and there is no significant rainfall in sight, Collin County will issue a burn ban for unincorporated Collin County. Regardless of whether or not a person has a valid burning permit, during a ban all outdoor burning under the permit are no longer permitted. The Collin County Judge issues an 90 day ban. If significant rains begin and the KBDI level drops during the 90 period, the County Judge can lift the ban. For further information, you may contact our office.

- If a wildfire breaks out in your area, stay close to TV and or radio to receive updates. Follow any instructions given by local officials.
 - As the fire nears, be prepared to evacuate family members and pets when instructed to do so.
 - You may want to gather pets into one location or room, back your vehicle into your drive or garage, keep the windows rolled up and the keys in the ignition, but do not lock the doors. This can optimize your evacuation time.
 - Close windows, doors and vents to your house.
 - Open the fireplace damper and close the screens.
 - Move flammable furniture and items to center of the house away from windows and doors.
 - Leave sprinklers on roof if possible.
 - Seal attic and ground vents with plywood.
 - Turn off any propane tanks.
 - Move flammable outdoor furniture inside or far away from the house.
 - Waterproof all valuables and put them in a pool if you have one.
 - Wet shrubs and roof.
 - If you are caught in the middle of a wild land fire, get down low in a pond or body of water and cover your head.
 - If you are not near any water, look for a large clearing or rock pile.
 - If you are near water wet your clothes and lay flat, if not cover yourself in dirt and lay flat.
 - Breath only the air closest to the ground and if possible through a wet cloth.
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- Do not return to you home until authorized by local officials to do so.
 - Take care when walking on smoldering materials.
 - Do not enter damages buildings until officials inspect them.



Everyone in Collin County knows what a tornado is. However, are you really prepared?

Though short lived, spring can be a very pleasant time of year in Collin County. But along with spring comes thunderstorms and our “tornado season”.

What To Do

- Make sure you have a portable radio with working batteries.
- Go to the lowest level of your home, inner hallway, small inner room or a closet.
- Cover your head and eyes with a blanket or jacket. You can use a mattresses, but don't waste too much time getting it.
- Remember that several tornadoes can come from the same storm.
- If you are in a mobile home, leave it immediately and seek shelter elsewhere.
- If you are outside, go inside immediately.
- If you cannot get inside a building, get down low next to a sturdy structure or lie flat in a ditch or low area and cover yourself with a jacket or clothing.
- If you are in a car the best thing to do is get out. If you can find a ditch or low lying area.

The Aftermath

- Make sure the storm has cleared.
- Stay clear of downed power lines and if possible report them to the power company.
- Do not enter damaged buildings until they have been inspected by local officials.
- If flooding has resulted, watch for snakes and other critters.
- Leave immediately if you smell gas fumes.
- When cleaning up, wear sturdy shoes, gloves and appropriate clothing.
- Clean up dangerous spill immediately.

Interesting Myths

- Tornadoes are not always visible from far away. They can be hidden by rain.
- Houses do not explode due to pressure from tornadoes. Houses are damaged by high winds of the tornado.
- Opening windows in your home does not help prevent any damage. If the tornado is large enough, it's going to take out the glass. However, by opening the windows you can do more harm due to water and wind coming into your home. You never know what the tornado is going to damage.
- The old rule was to seek shelter in the southwest part of a structure. This no longer is true. Seeking shelter in a small room or hall with no windows when there is no storm shelter or basement available is the best place to be.
- Not only can tornadoes cross water, they can form on top of them. This is called a water spout and can be just as damaging and dangerous.



It is estimated that the United States alone receives approximately 200 million cloud-to-to ground lightning strikes per year.

A lightning spark can be over 5 miles in length, be as hot as 50,000°F and contain over 100 million electrical volts.

If a lightning storm warning is issued:

- ✎ Stay abreast of the news via a portable radio. In North Texas a lightning storm usually means the power will flicker or completely go out.
- ✎ Unplug expensive appliances, lightning strikes can cause electrical surges.
- ✎ Stay away from faucets, sinks and bathtubs since metal pipes can conduct electricity.
- ✎ Avoid using the phone.
- ✎ Stay away from windows.
- ✎ If you are out in the storm and near water get to land and away from the water immediately.
- ✎ Seek a building over a car for shelter.
- ✎ If you are in your car, close the window.
- ✎ If you cannot find shelter, get to a low lying place away from trees or other tall objects. Squat low to the ground in a tuck position. Put your head between your knees and try to keep as little of your body from touching the ground as possible.
- ✎ **DO NOT LIE FLAT ON THE GROUND.** You will provide a greater surface to conduct electricity from.
- ✎ Watch for water you may need to move.
- ✎ If you ever feel your hair stand up during a storm, immediately assume the tuck position. This means that electrical charges are rushing up your body from the ground towards a electrically charged cloud.

Afterwards

- ✎ Administer first aid if needed.
- ✎ Note that a lightning victim usual has 2 sever burns.
- ✎ Stay away from downed power lines.
- ✎ Use flashlights rather than candles if the power is out.



FLOOD



Floods and Flash floods are the most common of all natural hazards and have caused billions of dollars worth of damage in the last few years. They are also the #1 weather-related killer.

There are three categories of floods. The first is a Flood (River Flood). This type of flood is an overflow of a river or lake over a period of time. The second is a Flash Flood. A flash flood is caused by quick rising water in a short period of time. The third type of flood is Coastal Flooding. This is flooding along a coast caused by high winds pushing water in from an ocean or bay. In Collin County we are most likely to deal with flash floods.

What To Do

It is very important that you may wise decisions during a flash flood. Water is very, very powerful and in an instant it can cause catastrophic consequences.

- ☔ Listen to TV and radio to keep updated on the situation
- ☔ Get to higher ground immediately
- ☔ If you are walking, do not go into flood waters, seek higher ground immediately
- ☔ Keep children and pets away from rising water, storm drains and sewers
- ☔ NEVER drive your car through water

If Evacuated

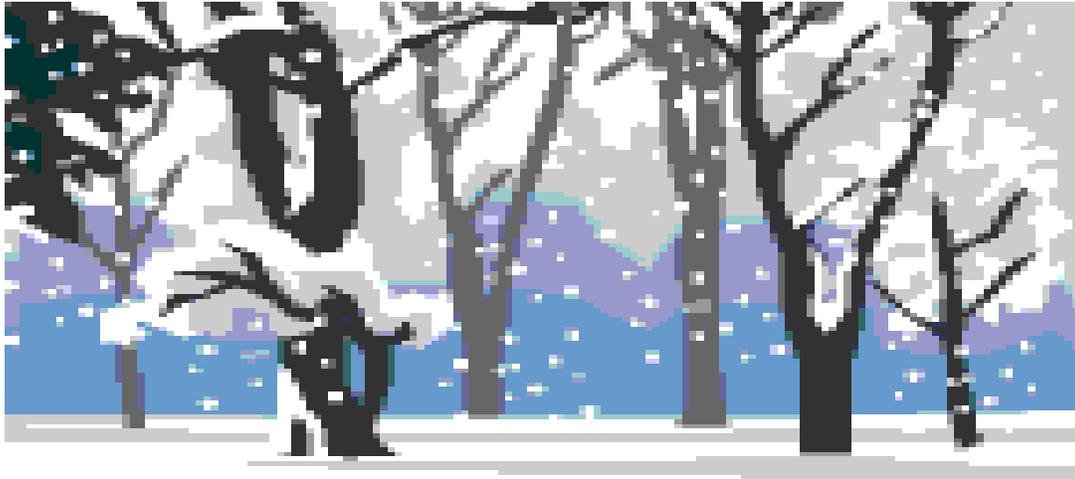
- ☔ Turn off all utilities
- ☔ Take your disaster supplies kit and extra blankets
- ☔ Lock your house when you leave
- ☔ Follow evacuation directions from local authorities – **DO NOT TAKE SHORT CUTS**

Afterwards

- ◆ Help those who are injured
- ◆ Look for snakes and other animals that may have gotten into your home
- ◆ Use flashlights
- ◆ Watch for hazards including fire hazards
- ◆ Wear protective clothing, sturdy shoes and gloves when cleaning up

Remember: NEVER, NEVER, NEVER drive through possibly high waters. We have all seen the film and pictures of people who “thought they could make it.” Take an alternate route and “make it”.

WINTER



Though Collin County doesn't have to deal with winter precipitation very often or for long periods during the winter months, we still get enough of it that it can sure cause havoc in our County.

Wind Chill – What Is It?

It's just like the "heat index" only with cold weather. This is the temperature that your body feels. It's the real temperatures plus with the wind speed taken into consideration and this is how cold it feels.

During A Winter Storm

- ✘ Listen to the TV or radio
- ✘ Keep you Disaster Kit on hand
- ✘ Stay indoors
- ✘ If you do have to go outside wear several layers of clothing including a hat and gloves and take measures to stay dry.
- ✘ Watch for frostbite – loss of feeling, white or pale fingers, toes, nose and or ears
- ✘ Watch for signs of hypothermia – uncontrollable shivering, slurred speech, drowsiness, memory lapses and stumbling

Driving In A Winter Storm

Of course the best thing to do is not to drive in bad weather conditions, but if you must please take extra care.

- 🚗 Tell someone where you are going and the route you will take to get there
- 🚗 Keep you gas tank full
- 🚗 Have a bag of sand or non-clumping cat litter in your car. This may help give you traction if you get stuck
- 🚗 Tire chains can help but they are not always permitted. Check with local authorities before using them
- 🚗 Drive slowly. You certainly won't get there any faster if you wreck
- 🚗 NEVER slam on your breaks especially if you don't have anti-lock breaks. Pump them to slow yourself down

- 🚗 If you get stuck, stay with your car and unless you can clearly see a building or destination DO NOT attempt to walk to safety
- 🚗 Tie a bright colored cloth to the antenna to help alert rescuers
- 🚗 Use the heater in your car sparingly. Start it once an hour for 10 minutes
- 🚗 Make sure your exhaust pipe is clear so that fumes do not back up into your car
- 🚗 Leave interior car lights on when running your car. This may help rescuers see you
- 🚗 Move around in your car to help keep the blood circulating in your body and may aid in keeping you warm
- 🚗 Leave a window cracked to allow fresh air in. Make sure that the window you crack is not facing the wind outside

Afterwards

- ❄️ Help those in need
- ❄️ When shoveling snow, be careful, dress warm and don't over exert yourself. Shoveling snow can be very tiring
- ❄️ Drive carefully. Snow will melt and then refreeze at night creating very icy conditions
- ❄️ If you have lost power use flashlight instead of candles to prevent accidental fires